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HENRY WARD BEECHER.

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FOUNDATION WORK.

"Yea, so have I strived to preach the Gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation."—ROM. xv. 20.

The converse is this:

"According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise master builder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon."

You will recollect that when Paul was converted he stood very high among his own people as a man eminent both in knowledge and in executive talent. He evidently took the lead in putting down a pestilent heresy that his countrymen thought had sprung up among them; and he pursued the methods which have been very widely pursued since the world began in putting down heresies—that is, differences of belief. Instead of using argument, he tried the sword, prisons, stones, anything that would make an impression; and it was when he was on one of his errands of convincing the world that Christianity was not true, that he was himself stricken down midway, and brought to a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. His whole career before and his whole life development afterward show us that one very strong element—the axis, as we might almost call it, of Paul's character—was his pride. He was a man of great firmness, with a temperament of the utmost fervor, and with fervent affections which had been held in check up to this time.

One would suppose that a man of such a nature, being converted, would have turned upon his heel, and gone to Jerusalem, and put himself at the head of the Christian movement. He was a bold man, fearing nothing, and ap-

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parently all the opportunities for a man of his executive energy would open in the neighborhood of the mother church, or the mother assemblies, in Jerusalem. But instead of going there, after spending some days in Damascus, and preaching in that place until the Jews of Damascus, enraged at his apostasy, as they would call it, attempted his life, he secretly went to Arabia, returning thence to Damascus. How soon he returned we do not know; but he spent the first three years of his ministry somewhere in Syria and Arabia. Of these first three years we have absolutely no account. He gives a simple statement of the time in the first of Galatians. Then he went to Jerusalem; but he stayed there only a fortnight, and saw none of the apostles except James, who seems to have been the chief. After that he departed and went into Asia Minor. For fourteen years he labored without going back to Jerusalem at all. Afterward, when he went back, it was for a very brief stay; and he declares that he preached the Gospel in places where nobody had been before him, seeking them out of preference. He was not after a settlement. He was not in search of a parish or a good salary. He was not trying to find rich synagogues of Jews who were ready to be converted. ' He went nowhere in the footprints of men who had gone first and taken the brunt of opposition and persecution. He went to the Gentile world. He was proud to go where foundations had not been laid, and to lay foundations that other men might build on them —as they did. This was the Apostle Paul's feeling in regard to his labor: "I will take foundation-work. Let other men have the building upon that."

Now, foundation work is always the hardest, as you will see if you go back to the figure from which this language was borrowed—namely, the rearing of a structure. Have you stood and looked at the great buildings that are being put up in New York and Broooklyn? Did you go down, as I did, into one of the caissons on which one of the great bridge towers stands, and see what foundations are? Not exactly following the apostle's example, but tempted by a natural curiosity to see anything that was being wrought by my fellow-men, I went down into one of the caissons while

it was being sunk. A vast, cavernous, tripartite room it was. It was sunk by taking away the dirt from under it, and sending it up through appropriate channels. The place was gloomy, oppressive, and nasty. Thousands and thousands of men will stand on the bridge and admire it, and admire the architectural skill displayed there, and praise the engineers, who will not think of the poor dirty fellows down on their hands and knees, clawing out the mud and stones in order to let the caisson go down. I shall always be thankful that I went down and saw these poor fellows; for though I shall never go over that bridge without thinking of the engineers and the men that early put their hands to that magnificent feat of enginery which was so much needed, I never shall go over it without also thinking of those that will not generally be thought of—the men that worked down at the bottom. I shall thank them, too. Men that do foundation work get few thanks from anybody.

Look at all those immense stores that are going up in these cities—for since the invention of hoistways men own a great deal more space than they thought they did, and they are going up heavenward; a thing that in New York I am always glad to see men do. But in proportion as you go up, you must preliminarily go down; and the consequence is that the laying of foundations is no small business. But it is the most awkward, the most difficult, the most unrequiting; and the beauty of it all is, that when you have worked your best, and worked most skillfully, your work is all hidden out of your sight, and nobody thanks you for it. The very thing on which the huge structure stands, and the well-doing of which determines the whole future of the superstructure—that which is of the first account and the least renumerative in the doing—is the most hidden, and has no praise—nothing except darkness.

Now, that a man should like to do that work is scarcely possible. A man may do it for bread—a man will do anything for his bread; but to do it for pleasure is not according to nature.

Offer a man a job, and ask him which part he would prefer to do. Say to him, "Will you work as a mason down at

the bottom, on the foundation, or will you work as a plasterer up above, or will you work as a carpenter laying the floor, or will you work as a carpenter trimming and finishing the doors and windows, or will you work as an upholsterer, bringing in polished furniture, and carpets, and all things that decorate? where would you prefer to work?" "I would prefer," says the man, "to do the frescoing. I would like to put on those dainty touches which are to make this thing shine, so that people, when they come in and look up and around, shall say, 'Why, he is a genius, ain't he?' They say that the colors put on in the Egyptian temples and pyramids are as brilliant to-day as they were the day they were put on; and I would like to have this building stand a thousand years, and have people come in and say, 'Who did that?' And I am going to have my name somewhere up there to show who did it." But if a man of refinement, a man of capacity, a genius, should come and say, "Why, let me do the lowest work; I will dig, and clear away, and lay the foundations, and take charge of the cellars; other men may build the superstructure, but I prefer to do the under work," people would say, "He is crazy." Everybody would protest, and declare that it was a shame. They would say, "Other men can do that work; but this man has genius, skill, capacity, and we need him higher up. There are a thousand men who can do what he proposes to do, but there is not one in a thousand who is able to do what he can do." And that is true. Men should be suited to the work which they perform. A genius ought not, as a general rule, to devote himself to things which thousands of men can do. Nevertheless, there is an element besides all that. There is a question of heroism. In all the world the bulk of mankind must do low, coarse, and disagreeable things. The great body of men must do things that are not remunerative in and of themselves. They must do work that takes the bone and the muscle; that wearies out the strength; that is done without observation; that is done at low wages; that is done with great pain and suffering; that is done without any praise; that is done to be forgotten; that is done for the most ephemeral remuneration. This is the fact in regard to the whole world.

Now, is there no way in which the great mass of men, sons of toil and sorrow, can labor at this foundation work so as that they can enjoy themselves and be happy? That has been the problem of ages. It is pre-eminently the problem of to-day, whether we can bring to bear on low planes any light that shall redeem men who work there. I see streaming from Paul's example light for the ages, that has never disclosed itself yet, and that is yet to be a gospel to the working poor.

What, then, did Paul say that he did?

"Yea, so have I strived to preach the Gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation."

He does not boast. It is simply an implication. "I went into Arabia," he says; "I labored three years where there was no apostle. I merely looked in at Jerusalem. I took my way northward into Asia Minor. I worked along the Euxine Sea, all through that mountainous and unsearched region where there had been no predecessor. There I was the first to preach, and there I took the brunt of opposition, or of indifference, which is worse than opposition. I not only took it, but I chose it. I strove for it." Yea, clear around to Illyricum—that is, the western part of Austria—he preached. He preached in Achaia, in Greece, in Macedonia, in all those colonies on the north, clear up to Austria, as it is now, and down to Italy and Rome. In all that country he says that he was the pioneer, taking the first and hardest work. Says he, "I strove to do it. I would not let anybody get ahead of me. It was my ambition, and I did it that I might not build where anybody else had built, but that I might lay foundations on which others should build."

What were the motives that actuated him? That is a very important question. In the first place, here is what you may call Christian pride. Paul never for a moment forgot that he had been a persecutor; but he declared that he was not one whit behind the chiefest of the apostles. When men undertook to invalidate his teachings, and said to him, "You are only a bastard apostle, you did not belong to the original twelve," he rose up and asserted his

apostolicity, and said, "The gospel I did not receive of men. It was not James that told me of this gospel, nor Peter. Of God I received it,"—alluding to his conversion on the road to Damascus. He vindicated his equality with the apostolic band—not for the sake of praise and glory, but because he would not have his message discredited. Not for his own sake but for the sake of the message, he declared that he was fully the equal of any of the apostles. His temperament was such as would make him feel himself quite as much as he was. So he says, "I am not behind any man. I am a match for anybody. I am a full-grown man. I am a Jew." When a man wants to praise himself excessively, he tells what country he came from. An Englishman says, I am an *Englishman.*" "Thank God," says his neighbor over the channel, "I am a real full-blooded *Frenchman.*" We say, wagging our heads at cathedrals and palaces and towers, "Thank God, I am an *American.*" And we say, or shall on the approaching 22d, "Thank God, we are *Yankees.*" So every man mentions his nationality as though that conveyed the highest conception of manhood. And so Paul said, "I am a Jew." He felt the dignity of being a Jew—and he had a right to; for there is no nobler stock, and there never was a grander mission, than that which God gave to the Jew. We that revile the Jews are dividing among ourselves the ideas and legacies which were wrought out by their prophets and teachers; and Paul had a right to say, standing as he did amidst ancient civilization, "I am a Jew, and I am not a whit beneath any of the apostles."

What, then, is it becoming in a man to do? He ought to do work that nobody else can do as well as he. A man ought to say, "It is my place to do the things that are the hardest, and that men take to the least naturally, and are the most inclined to shirk. My business is to work where nobody else will work." Such should be the spirit of him who feels himself to be a man. It is quite in keeping with the spirit which our Master urged when he said, "He that would be chief, let him be a servant; he that would be greatest must be content to be among the least."

Thousands and thousands of men are looking about for

places. Thousands and thousands of men want something to do. Oh! that the spirit of Paul was among young scholars, young preachers, young operatives. Then they would say, not, "Who will show me a good parish?" not, "Who will show me a remunerative place?" not, "Who will show me where honor is to be obtained?" not, "Who will put me, the Lord's candle, in a golden candlestick?" but, "Where is there a place that needs some one to fill it, and that other men do not want to go to? That is the place for me, because I am a man, and a *Christian* man."

Such is the ideal of pride. It is not saying, "Bring honor to me; bring to me praise; bring to me the fat of the land; bring to me all delicacies; I am the great man whom all things are to serve." That is infidel pride. That is devilish pride. But if pride says, "I am wise, and I ought to go to the ignorant, because the darkest place needs the greatest light; I am strong, and ought to do the hardest things, because the weakest folks can do the least; I am refined, and ought to go where there is a lack of refinement, because rudeness needs the most refining," then it is true pride. If a man says, "By as much as I am better than other people I ought to serve them," then he is proud in the right direction. People preach against pride. They do not see that they should put pride to such service as this. It is very easy for me to denounce pride in this pulpit; it is very easy for me to stand here and talk about the dangers of pride; but I tell you, the way to deal with pride is to set it to work. Thousands of men have been destroyed for want of pride, where one has been destroyed by excessive pride. Pride is a glorious thing, provided it is disciplined, and employed according to the canon of Christ, and not according to the tendency of wild nature.

Then Paul had a feeling that he never got over, thank God, to the end of his life, proud as he was with Christian pride. He always carried with him one wound which would not heal. "I persecuted the church," he said. He never could get it out of his mind that he, "the least of the apostles," "persecuted the Church of God." You will say that it was a sentimental thing. It was sentimental. He did not look

at it according to the way of the world. Most persons would have said, "Paul, don't feel so bad about this matter; you went according to the ideas of your age; you followed your natural instincts: you made a mistake, to be sure; but all you had to do was to turn on your heel, when you saw your mistake, and quit it." That, however, did not satisfy him. Oh, to have persecuted Jesus! The more he thought of it, the worse he felt. The more he knew of Christ, the more he understood his relations to the world and his love to the dying creatures of his kind, the more awful it seemed to him that he ever lifted his hand against the Saviour, and that he ever put to death one that believed on him. It was a perpetual sorrow to him. He knew that it did not stand against him; but he was a man of such a generous nature that he never could forget it; and he, as it were, put upon himself tasks which no other man would take by way of making amends for that wrong which he had committed. He said, "It is fit that I, who smote the infant church, should go among those who never knew Christ, and bear the brunt of advancing his kingdom all over the world." That is the kind of penance which one may well glory in. The humility of his fall was as magnificent as his pride.

Then there was his feeling of love to Christ—for wherever he was the main conception of Paul's life was heroic, enthusiastic, and, if you please, fanatical love of the Lord Jesus Christ. It filled his whole soul. It was the fountain which could not be restrained, but which gushed out in every direct and indirect way. And he felt, "There is nothing that love cannot do." *Is* there anything that love cannot do? Oh, how many times, when their boys were suffering of fever in the hospital, or of wounds on the battle-field, did mothers, feeble, and with scanty means, go on foot, threading their way through state after state, through the wilderness, through cold, through heat, through hunger and through thirst, to find out those boys! And all the way they counted not their own suffering anything. By day and by night, wherever they were, and under all circumstances, they were supported by the thought, "All this I do for the love that I bear for that boy." And love would do an hundred times

more if it were necessary. It has no language, and therefore it seeks by service to heap up some outward sign or token of what it is, and what it would do. The deeper the love, the more it glories in some form of expression that implies sacrifice, endurance, suffering.

"God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

These are magnificent, ultimate presentations of that which we see all about us. How love is crippled by language! How small it feels itself to appear in comparison with its intent! How poor it is for this world's use! How it seeks, therefore, some mode of making itself known! And to Paul it was not enough to sing, or pray, or praise. "O," he said, "that I might do something to signify how I love him that loved me! What am I that Jesus did not make me? What is there noble in me that is not of him? Every worthy thought or feeling that I have is inspired by him! It is not to man's praise that I am what I am, but to the glory of Him that, loving me, redeemed me with his precious love." And so he said, "Give me the hardest work; for the hardest work will show the greatest love." When he had wrought everywhere, through all wildernesses, and all foreign cities—in the midst of perils of false brethren and riotous heathen mobs, on the sea and on the land, clear down to the end, and lay in the prison at Rome, chained to a soldier, he said, "Let no man henceforth disturb me." When he was a prisoner, waiting his summons, he had this one feeling:

"I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me."

It was Christ that occupied his mind to the last.

Besides that, there was one other thing. As out of the love of Christ comes the love of men, so Paul felt that in doing foundation work he was making a contribution to the happiness of his kind. This he intimates in the first of Corinthians, the third chapter, and the tenth verse:

"According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise master-builder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon."

Elsewhere he repeatedly speaks of sowing and not reap-

ing, that others may reap what he has sown. He changes the figure from the agricultural to the architectural one.

This conception, that he was making the way easier for somebody else; that he was bearing pain that others might not have pain to bear; that he was going through personal suffering—hunger and thirst and sickness—that others might come, and in peace and comfort occupy fields which had been laid open to them—this it was that marked the truest element in the character of this true man.

I see that Renan and others undervalue Paul. I hear him scoffed at, or spoken disparagingly of in one way or another; but to my mind there never lived upon the earth more than two or three men. One was Moses, and one was Paul. Perhaps there have been one or two more; but two at least, of the four or five great natures of the world, have been Jews. Men of such magnificent zeal, of such glorious self-sacrifice, and of such long-continued service (thirty one years there were of his ministry)—such men do not come in every age; and when they do come in any age there are very few that know how to appreciate them. Paul stood head and shoulders above every other man. There never has been a greater than he. He lived and died for the love of Christ, and for the love of mankind.

Now, as I have intimated, this example of Paul's ought to throw light upon the great necessities of our age. The whole world is moving. There is a sort of fermentation going on among all nations. Aspiration has dawned upon those that sit in darkness and in the region and shadow of death, and they are seeking to work their way upward. Men low down are desirous now of equaling those who are more favored than themselves. The question of the rights of men is a question that is not half developed to its fullness; and we are having discontent, distraction, complaints, arguments, sympathies, or assaults, as the case may be. The great race is astir. There is a wind in the forest, and the leaves are murmuring, each one its own song.

One side says, "This is the result of going out of the true church. It is owing to the want of proper subordination. It comes from lack of faith, of obedience, and of

conformity to the prescriptions of the true church." Others say, "It is a process of escape out of the torpidity and death of the 'true church,' as it is called. It is a sign of life in universal humanity, and of its motion upward."

Whatever it may be, we know that manhood is tormented by these thousand questions. Nor do I propose to say that there is a cure for this fermentation. It must go on, if the race is to be developed, and is to come forth from its degradation. We must receive men at the bottom of life; we must take them low down, undeveloped, unrefined, coarse; and there must be tribulation in society until, in some way or other, they shall have largeness in manhood. It is of no use to measure the top to ascertain what mankind are. I do not look at the gold with which a rich man tips his lighting-rod, to find out what is the condition of his family: I go down into the house where the servants and children and people live, to see what their condition is. And you may say as much as you please about the higher classes, it is the base of society that determines civilization and refinement. If in a community there are a million cattle at the bottom under the name of men, and there are a thousand magnificent gentlemen at the top, it is not a prosperous community. The measure of civilization and of Christianity in the community must be taken where the mass of its population reside.

Now, the question of the times is, "What is the condition of the great laboring mass, the thousand to one, that earn their daily bread, and that eat their bread by the sweat of their brow? Is their condition ample, large?" No, it is not. And we know that everything goes up by birth-throes, by contentions. We know that it is necessary that there should be struggle, conflict, fighting, in life, in order that the fruit of the Spirit may be wrought out in men.

One of the lessons of the example of Paul is, that there is to be a consecration of men's pride in work. It is not inconsistent with elevation that a man should feel pride in his work. I mean not manual labor alone, but the labor of all men who are serving in the lower offices of life. There is a reason of pride why they should be faithful and contented.

They ought to carry pride into their business. Every true man should feel, "I bring to my work the worth that is in it, no matter how low it is. *I* am doing this work." And as it was said, "Where I sit, there is the head of the table," so a man should say, "Where I labor, there is honorable work." That is legitimate pride. That is pride using itself to a purpose.

False pride says to a man, "Why are you bothering yourself with these trifles? What makes you work down here? this is not becoming to you. You are a man that ought to come up higher." That is the world's pride; but that is true pride where one, being placed, in the providence of God, under inferior circumstances where he has to do disagreeable work, makes things honorable which he touches.

If in the time of Christ you had gone to Jerusalem, with all its priests, with all its temples, with all its officers, with all its Herods and Pilates, tell me who would have been the man the least to be envied there. It would have seemed to be He who was about to be led out to crucifixion. Go to Jerusalem to-day, and find a place where he put his foot, and a million men crowd thither, pilgrims from every nation, willing to bow down and kiss that place. Why, what did he give to it? Himself. It was the manliness of the man, it was the divinity of the man, it was the soul-element which he brought to it, that consecrated the place, and made it a shrine for the eternities. And men who work with a sense of their manhood bring their pride, their fidelity, their industry, and their integrity to their work, and impart something of themselves to what they do. When men consecrate themselves to their labor, that labor itself means something different from what it otherwise would. It is no more ignominious, and it is no more a bondage. The trouble with men who labor at disagreeable work is, that while the work is mean, the workman is meaner. There is no remuneration in it because they bring to it none of that large, glorious self which dignifies small things, lending them the color of the soul.

There may be a spirit of benevolence as well as selfness, dignity, and pride connected with one's work. In that view men who are doing low work are working for their fellow-

men. If you need to have a clamorous recognition of your contributions to life (which is contrary to the example, intent and precept of our Master), then there may be some reason for discontent on your part in doing obscure, inconspicuous work. But do you suppose the engineer who built Eddystone lighthouse, working through winter and summer to lay the foundations of that magnificent structure, never thought, in the intervals of his labor, "How many ships coming home from foreign lands and bringing the husband, the son, the lover, will run safely into harbor by reason of this work that I am now doing, putting stone upon stone, clamping block of granite upon block of granite"? Toiling hard in winter, and harder in the storms of summer, he was rearing that lighthouse; and though most of his work was invisible, he knew that it would be the salvation of myriads of men who never would know whose work saved them until they were in heaven. Do not you suppose that he had such visions? If he did not have them, he was not the man that I take him to have been.

Let men who are working in life think, for their encouragement, how many will probably be blessed by their work. Do not be selfish in what you do.

When the cook raises the bread and bakes it, and it comes out of the oven sweet and delicious, should she think, "Oh, those dear little mouths! oh, those hungry children! how happy it will make them all!" or should she think, "Well, now, my mistress cannot say but that I am the smartest cook in the kitchen"? One is selfish and the other is generous. Which is the most becoming? Which is the noblest?

"What is it that you are working at—you that work in feebleness and pain?" "I am making a cradle." "Oh! making a mahogany cradle. Whose is it?" "Well, it belongs to Mr. Applecorn. He has a family coming on, you know." "But it is hard work for you." "Yes, yes; but I think, as I work and suffer here, how many sweet little babies will be lying in that cradle, and how they will coo and sing. Then I think how, when they get out, others will get in—a whole flock of them. I follow them in my mind as they grow up. I seem to see them running in and out of the

door. I think how some of them, when they are grown up, will take that cradle for *their* children, and how many times mothers will sing by it—for mothers *do* sing, you know. They keep singing with their babies. I think how the children become young folks, and how the young folks get married, till it seems to me as though everybody was courting and marrying and having children. I have a real good time thinking these things over." And he goes to work again. Now, is not that a good thing to do?

Suppose another man, under the same circumstances, should say, "Here I am, a poor cabinet maker. I ain't half paid for my work. That old fellow is going to get this cradle. He ought to give me twice as much as I am going to get for it. I do not know what God made me for. I have no luck in this world!" Oh, you mean man! The most unlucky thing to such a man was his being born. If he had the inspirations of a noble life, how easy it would be for him to take the lowly tasks which are brought to his hand, and make them beautiful! It is not hard to make things beautiful provided you have a beautiful soul; provided you have sympathy with your kind; provided you slay the snake of selfishness; provided you have that benevolence which the gospel breathes in every single aspiration.

How many men, when they are performing their manual tasks, contrive to perform them from the meanest motives! How they go about, curmudgeons, groaning, and doing their work poorly, meanly, stingily, with a bad temper and with miserable remunerations! On the other hand, suppose a man should bring to the lower duties of life a manly, noble feeling. Suppose every time you met a man who was going about at night watching the dwellings of the neighborhood, you should stop and talk with him, and find that he looked with pride on his vocation, and rejoiced in his work. Suppose he said, "There are some hardships connected with it, and I do not receive very much for doing it; but I take a great deal of comfort in it. As I walk along Brooklyn Heights here, I think of the tired creatures that are fast asleep; I think of the children; I think of all the people in these houses. When I see a light burning late at night, I

know that somebody is sick, and I am sorry, and hope they will get well. So I have company in my thoughts, looking after one and another and another of those under my care. My monthly pay is not very much; I have rather a hard time; but I have enjoyment as well." Suppose, instead of that, another man, rendering the same service, should, every time you met him, say, "I have an awful hard time, and I have only small wages; couldn't you give me a little more?" The difference between two such men is as great as the difference between white and black, or between heaven and hell. A man who lives in his lower nature, and only in his lower nature, lives in hell.

So then, thus far, work may be largely redeemed by the spirit which you bring to it; but if you add to this a higher motive, even; if men, as Christians, recognize that there is a providence that supervises all human affairs; if they listen to and reflect upon what Christ said—"Not a sparrow falls to the ground without your Father's notice"—they will derive a comfort from that source which they can obtain from no other.

I sat yesterday by my back window up stairs, looking out into the yard, and saw twenty or thirty sparrows enjoying themselves down on my border. I never knew before why I left so many weeds there, but now I see that it was that the sparrows might play with them, and get green leaves from them in the winter. The significance of that passage came to me as it never had before. There I sat, and not one of these sparrows could move that I did not see him. I had an empty ink bottle and one or two soda bottles at hand, and if a cat had come near I would have sent her flying! I was watching over them. To be sure there was all New York, there was the great harbor, there were the steamers and ships, and I saw them, and did not undervalue them; I saw the whole panorama of industry; I saw the dim dust and smoke, and heard the thunder of that dragon on the other side, that crouches down with its thousand eyes at night, and that roars all day long; and yet the sparrows were as plain to me as that great city; and it gave new meaning to my Master's words, when he said, "Not a sparrow falls to the ground

without your Father's notice, and ye are of more value than many sparrows."

How sweet and balmy is this kind of faith! Does He that gave himself for me take care of me every day? Does not a hair fall from my head that he does not know it?

Suppose you take that faith into your disagreeable work, and say, "I am serving my Lord and Christ; I came into life under his eye; all my ways are appointed by him; natural law and human agency are part and parcel of something greater than they, like the letters of the alphabet in a word, or like words in a sentence; men's joys and acts are elements that help to make the providence of God; and that providence is ordaining my work"—is it not a great comfort to you? Happy are you if you can say, "The Lord God hath put me here; and, standing here, whether I work, or whether I rest, whether I eat, or drink, or whatever I do, I am to do it to the glory of God." And if you say, "Lord, wilt thou receive this mixed labor of mine?" He says, "Yes, it is for me. Inasmuch as you do the least and the lowest of these duties, I accept them."

Then it becomes a question of allegiance — of love. Where there is love, it can transmute everything, and make it radiant. There is nothing so black that love does not change it to a bright white. There is nothing so low that love does not exalt it and crown it. There is nothing so impure that love does not cleanse it and make it divine.

Oh, that men could carry the love of Christ into their work! Oh, that they might feel that they serve Christ in whatever worthy thing they do! Oh, that their love for him and trust in him might bring to them light and joy and peace!

And then suppose, in the case of men in these lower places of toil unremunerated, there is this reflection: "I am working but for a little time here. Ere long I shall be translated; and then the last shall be first and the first shall be last. Dives was seen far down, and the beggar was seen in Abraham's bosom. There will be a redistribution." If men live vulgarly because they are very low in life, they will not rise much, they will start there where they leave off here;

but if men are in low circumstances, and if on that very account they develop a Christian heroism, purifying themselves, and converting into noble effects all the great forces of their being, do not you suppose that will make a difference with them in the other life?

You see it and you appreciate it everywhere. Why is it that in circumstances of peril a poor ignorant woman, giving her life for others, doing what others would not do, becomes immortal?

Grace Darling, who has saved so many lives at the risk of her own—what was it that gave her a name? It was that she heroically performed an unrequited service which was not demanded of her. Lowly in life, in rude conditions, she put forth a disinterestedness, a courage, a self-sacrifice which has made her illustrious already.

Now, in this great world of unrewarded service, of tears, of sorrows, of troubles innumerable, do you suppose God forgets, as men do? We do not see what is going on in the houses of the poor; we do not know what sufferings and sacrifices are playing up and down the ranks of men in low conditions of life, but God never fails to see. And, oh! what a revelation there will be when, not the men who live in ceiled houses, not the men who carry crowns and scepters, not the men whose names resound through the newspapers—not they, but men standing in poverty, men who occupy dangerous places, men in mountain fastnesses, uncombed, unfed, degraded—what a revolution there will be when these men are raised to the stations where they belong in the sight of God! There have been men in whom manhood grew in spite of their degradation. How glorious is such a manhood! and when God shall reveal it, and all men shall see it in the other life, it will shine as a star in the firmament.

O ye great army of unrequited laborers everywhere, be *men*. Weep if you will—every tear shall turn to pearl, and every pearl shall be a part of your coronation. Be faithful, be manly, be proud of what you are, and wherever you are fill up the measure of love and peace with all that is best, for Christ's sake, for man's sake, for your own sake, and for the

sake of heaven, that by and by shall give you ten thousand thousand thrilling joys, rolling forever, for every sorrow and every sigh that you have in this mortal sphere.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

THOU, O God, art our Shield against ten thousand dangers of which we are ignorant, and against thousands which we perceive. Thou art our defense. We have neither wisdom nor strength to lift ourselves against those influences which malign and would destroy us. Thou art our Sun, giving us light; for if we had no light but that which is of nature, if we had only the natural sun, and the things upon which we tread, and which we use, to give us knowledge, how poor would that knowledge be, growing poorer! For as we lift ourselves high above the earth on which we tread, and are conversant with the ineffable, with things spiritual, our souls bear witness that they cannot live by bread alone. We cannot live by that which is within the horizon of time and earth. We need thee in the struggle of life where we battle manfully. We need the sustaining grace of God. We need the thought not merely of thine existence and power, but of thy presence, and of all those relations which bring us into intimate association with thee; and we rejoice, O God, that thou hast made thyself so manifest in the presence of Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour, as that every one of us can apprehend thee, and bring thee near, and appropriate thee. And the life which we live in the flesh we live by faith of the Son of God—of Him who loved us while yet we were afar off, alien, enemies of Him who brought us near by his own blood, by suffering, by sorrow, making known to us thy life.

We rejoice, O thou blessed Saviour, that thou hast addressed thyself to all that is deepest and dearest in us; that our hearts cling to thee more than a vine to its support; that our souls come forth to thee in all their wants; that thou art associated in our minds with whatever is comely, whatever is needful, whatever is blessed.

We rejoice that thou art all in all, so that our sorrows, our fears, our hopes, our joys, our lives, our duties, our daily experiences, are in thee. In thee we live, and move and have our being. We pray that this may be realized by every one of us. May it be a source of joy and strength to us every day. May Christ be in us the hope of glory continually. May he be our support in life and in death. And whether we eat, or drink, or whatsoever we do, may we do it all to the honor of God. So may we associate ourselves with thee by thoughts of thy glory that we can no longer feel our own littleness. Sinful and poor as we are in ourselves, we are not poor nor small when associated with God. Once beloved of thee, we have an eternal heritage of glory. When thou hast once adopted us and called us thine own, we are King's sons that stand in no mean place, wherever we stand. We pray that thou wilt grant that every soul may be so led to take Christ as to inherit with him all things. How great is he! How great is his glory! And yet, he is not ordained to anything of which we shall not partake with him. If he is beloved, so shall we be. If there are songs, and rejoicing, and gratulation for him, so there are for us; for we are in him, and his glory is in us.

We pray that we may have the preciousness of all these truths, and that we may be upheld by them now in the time of our darkness

and conflict in this mortal sphere. Grant that all those who are burdened with a continual sense of their own selves, and who are seeking to be good by looking upon the disfigurements and imperfections of their life, may at last look up; for as they who live in caves can never see the rising sun if they look only into the cave, so they who only look within themselves cannot see the light of hope. Grant, therefore, that thy servants may no longer look in upon their imperfect hearts and dispositions; but may they look out and see what glory there is in Jesus, in the Father, and in the eternal inheritance. May they live less and less revolving around themselves, and seek more and more to be good by drawing hope of salvation from things which are outside of themselves, and in the realm of the divine nature.

We pray that if there are any who cannot bring thee near to themselves, thou wilt draw near to them. Thou who didst go forth to seek him who was cast out of the Synagogue, and who was lying alone, and dying, among his own countrymen—wilt thou draw near to all who are in feebleness, and enable them to lift themselves up to thee. If thou art a Physician,—and thou art,—then search out the sick and the weak. If thou art beneficent,—and thou art,—then look after the poor and needy. Yea, thou dost go about doing good. Thou didst come to seek and to save to the uttermost. We do not ask that thou wouldst open thine heart; we ask, rather, that we may have faith imparted by thy Holy Spirit to conceive of the greatness of the glory of thine heart which hangs like a summer over the earth, and out of which comes all life and all blessing.

Grant, we beseech of thee, that the eyes of the blind may be opened, and that their ears may be unstopped. Grant that those whose hands hang down, and whose knees are feeble, may lift up holy hands of joy and praise in the presence of Jesus, the glory of heaven, the hope of earth, our Lord and our Salvation.

We thank thee, blessed Saviour, for all the past. We thank thee for the ministration of thy Spirit to us; and though our knowledge of thee is so little, as compared with what we should know, yet how great is it as compared with the ignorance with which we began! We pray that thou wilt continue thy presence and companionship with us, keeping us from despondency, and unfaith, and doubt, and giving us, from day to day, if not the glorious light of the Sun of Righteousness, at least some star that shall lead us, and overhang the place where Jesus lies. Grant that thus we may follow thee as little children, if we cannot fight for thee as soldiers full-grown. And may we be willing to be here or there, high or low, so that we may have a consciousness that we are serving our Lord Jesus Christ. We pray that we may not be unwilling to do the homeliest and the least things. May we not seek for the trumpet-call of praise. May we do the things which we do for Christ, and not for ourselves, nor for the praises of men.

We pray that thou wilt help all whose struggle is with pride; all whose struggle is with avarice; all who seek to overcome irritable passions—an ungoverned temper and an unruly tongue; all who strive against doubt and fear; all who are whelmed in uncertainties; all who are unable to fulfill their resolutions; all who do not know how

to minister in their perplexities; all of every class and condition whose trouble is known to them, and is far better known to thee.

Grant grace, mercy, and peace to every one to-day. If there be those who sit in the darkness of recent sorrow, let the light arise upon them—even the hope that shines from thy life. If there be those who are in the midst of remembered sorrows which will not let them go, and which still grow with their growth, we pray that thou wilt grant to them that divine succor which man cannot give, and which is of God. We pray for them, that they may have abundant tokens that thou art walking with them in the valley of the shadow of death. May thy rod and thy staff comfort them. May they lean upon thee. If thou dost use thy rod upon them may they rejoice to know that it is for their saving and not for their destruction.

We pray that thou wilt bless all who are working in thy vineyard. May they do it with more alacrity, with nobler motives, with more earnestness.

We pray that thou wilt grant, everywhere, that thy kingdom may come, that thy will may be done among men, that thy Gospel may be preached more purely and faithfully, and that out of it may come knowledge, and obedience to laws, and wisdom in the establishment of institutions, and equity and temperance. May whatever is beneficent spring up in our times, and may this nation be known as a Christian nation, and show forth the glory of God in its midst.

We pray that thou wilt hasten the day when knowledge and righteousness shall visit all nations, and when there shall be no more oppression, no more ignorance and superstition, no more war, no more sighing or crying, but when the whole earth shall be filled with thy glory, and when the new heaven and the new earth shall come in which dwelleth righteousness.

And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son and Spirit, evermore. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we pray that thou wilt give comfort and encouragement to those who are despondent. Send light into the dark places of the earth. Thou that didst come to open prison doors, open them and illuminate the souls of such as are in despair. Thou that didst come to break shackles, bring men out of thrall to their own passions. Thou that didst come to lift men up out of their low condition, raise those who are sunk in want and ignominy. Fulfill thy purposes in respect to those who are in any trouble.

We pray for the poor. We pray for the overworked. We pray for those who have no work. We pray for all the suffering families who are deprived of the means of support to-day. We pray that thou wilt overrule the folly and the wisdom of men, and cause both to praise thee. Hear, we beseech of thee, the groanings of the great human family who are striving to become divine, but who are

tempted of the devil. Mankind wrought upon, or unwrought upon, by fancies, by fears, by turmoils, by consciousness of sin and guilt, or of weakness—O thou Deliverer, we think of them all; and so dost thou. It is not enough that we are safe, that our households are safe, that our church is safe, that the brotherhood of churches is safe, or that our nation is safe: what wilt thou do for the world? Thou hast told us that the field is the world; and we think of it, and dream about it, and night and day our wonder is, what God does with the great family of mankind; but thou dwellest in eternity, all things are plain to thee; and when we rise out of this life, its mysteries dissolve before thy face, like the mists of the morning before the light of the sun. O Sun of Righteousness, all things shall be made plain when we come into thy presence. Therefore, while we see not, we trust thee; and we pray, Let thy kingdom come, and let thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

And to thy name, Father, Son and Spirit, shall be eternal praises. *Amen.*

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